UNITED NATIONS STAFF UNION

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DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR STAFF UNION CONTRIBUTIONS ARE BEING SPENT?

Under normal circumstances, most of us throw anonymous allegations in the trash. And rightly so. Because if the people who write such stuff don't have the courage to identify themselves, why should we give it credence? Usually such anonymous accusations don't merit the dignity of a response because it is difficult to have a meaningful discussion with people who refuse to be identified.

Recently however, such a sheet was being handed out by one current and one former member of the Staff Council. It makes a series of unfounded and false statements about decisions of the Staff Council regarding financial and budgetary matters and seems to suggest that the Staff Union is headed for immediate and total bankruptcy. While some staff may discount this kind of anonymous attack for what it is, others may believe, without being informed otherwise, that it is true. Also a petition was circulated recently suggesting that the Staff Council had adopted some "new direction" in its financing and budgetary procedures.

The Staff Committee feels it regrettable to have to respond to these kinds of anonymous and unfounded allegations. Unfortunately whatever is put down in writing, however salacious or false, finds its way or is put into the hands of those who wish neither the Staff Union nor the staff well. Worse, it diverts the attention of the Staff Committee and the Council from the real and serious problems that have to be addressed before the Fifth Committee and other bodies related to the terms and conditions of service such as General Service pensions, Professional salaries, vacancy management and promotion, secretarial reclassification and a host of other problems. One can only conclude that such material is put out with the purpose of damaging the Union and the staff in the process.

The approved budget of the 35th Staff Council is attached to this document. All expenditures of the Staff Union have to be made within the context of this budget. Each item of expenditure has to be approved by a separate resolution passed by the Staff Council. The Staff Committee has no authority nor does it make any expenditures on its own. The auditing of Staff Union

accounts is a perennial problem because we have had to depend largely on volunteer help from auditing staff who cannot always be released from their duties to do this work. This problem has been tackled, however by a decision of this Staff Council to hire an outside auditing firm to bring the auditing up to date.

Hospitality is and has been a normal expenditure of the Council over the years and is necessary on some occasions in order to meet with people who make decisions about our lives in the Organization. No Staff Union money was approved or allocated to have lunch with the Chairman of ICSC. However, the three executive officers of CCISUA, which is a federation of unions of which New York is a part, did invite the Chairman of ICSC to dinner. It was paid for out of the CCISUA budget.

The decision of the Staff Council to join with World Bank staff and other agency staff representatives to assist the G-4 Visa Family Coalition was not conditional on any matching contribution from the U.N. administration. The other staff organizations which are cooperating in this venture to retain legal counsel have paid their respective shares. The U.N. administration said it might, but did not formally commit itself. The Staff Council felt this was a worthy cause that deserved support notwithstanding the actions of our administration.

The cancellation of Staff Day this year had nothing to do with losses experienced by the Staff Day Committee over the last few years. Those losses, which were fully discussed in the Staff Council, resulted from declining revenues in the sale of drinks and the fact that no admission charge is made for staff members. Every year the Staff Council has given an advance to support Staff Day. In some years that advance has been returned to the Staff Council based on receipts from Staff Day. Again this year the Staff Council approved a $25,000 advance to the Staff Day Committee, but was informed by the Committee that because of the Council's belated consideration of the item, there was not enough time to organize a meaningful programme. The practice of the Staff Day Committee to have a buffet and bar for organizers, performers and support staff of Staff Day is a longstanding one and not something started during the 34th Staff Council.

Field Service Staff have contributed to the New York Staff Union since the early 1950's. In recent years because of the growth in peacekeeping missions and other operations as well as the advent of the Staff Management Coordination Committee and CCISUA, the Field Service staff felt the need to organize their own Union because of the difficulty of being effectively

represented through the New York Staff Council. Because of representational expenses and travels which they have to undertake, they requested to have a refund of some of their contributions made over time to the New York Staff Union. This was felt to be a legitimate request by the N.Y. Staff Council which agreed to help them establish their Union funds through a rebate of $20,000.

The slander sheet claims that the "generosity of the Staff Committee has taken on global proportions" through the giving of funds to an outside corporation. This is false. The Staff Council approved $10,000 to aid Ethiopian refugees. This approval followed an initiative taken during the 34th Staff Council to provide some $5,600 to aid victims of the earthquake in Iran. This was followed in May of this year by a grant of $10,000 to aid victims of the cyclone in Bangladesh, after which came the request to aid Ethiopian refugees. Several members of the Staff Council warned at the time of the Iran initiative that the decision to use Staff Union funds for emergency relief operations would lead to difficulties because we simply did not have sufficient funds to give to all the worthy causes in all countries. This situation was corrected, however, by a resolution passed by the present Staff Council in July which stipulated that no further moneys would be given for disaster relief activities but that the Council would actively promote independent fund raising.

The present initiative to recall the Treasurer has nothing directly to do with the question of aid to Ethiopian refugees. The Treasurer has refused to implement various decisions taken by the Staff Council and in general to perform his duties. A motion of recall was introduced to deal with his non-performance.

It is not true that the President, who travelled to the Pension Board meetings in Paris in his capacity as President of CCISUA, did not wish to travel economy class. In fact, he purchased economy-class tickets at the price that had been approved by the Staff Council for the person going to those meetings on behalf of the New York staff to work on General Service pensions (referred to as the President's "companion" in the slander sheet). The Treasurer did not question that amount when it was approved by the Staff Council, but waited until the President had purchased the economy-class tickets from a regular travel agent, whereupon he informed the President he could get the tickets at a much lower rate elsewhere and the purchased tickets would have to be cancelled. At the airport the clerk noted that the tickets obtained by the Treasurer had been issued against frequent-flyer mileage. Neither of those who were travelling were frequent flyers.

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The intent of the staff representatives who have started this disinformation campaign is to discredit the Staff Committee and in the process destroy the Staff Union, at this very critical time. It is regrettable that while our salaries and pensions are in jeopardy, a Staff Council member should waste his time and everybody else's on this kind of abject exercise.

We will in the near future be convening a General Meeting of the Staff Union to discuss these and other related issues.

APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE 35TH STAFF COUNCIL

A. Cash Budget for the Period 1 April 1991 to 31 March 1992

Balance of Cash as of 31 March 1991: $1,392,575.

(1) Projected Income

Contributions	$120,573.
Interest Income	$ 87,000.
Staff Day 1990 (*)	$ 10,000.
Total Receipts	$217,573.

(2) Projected Expenditures

Total Expenditures $206,438.58
(For detail see Part B., below)

(3) Projected Excess of Income Over Expenditures

$11,134.42

$11,134.42

(4) Projected Cash Balance as of 31 March 1992

$1,403,709.42

B. Proposed Expenditures for the Period 1 April 1991 to 31 March 1992

Section 1: Salaries and Common Staff Costs

(1.a)	Overtime and Temporary Assistance (Clerical/Secretarial help if needed)	2,000.
(1.b)	Consultant and Expert Assistance	10,000.
(1.c)	Accounting/Auditing Assistance (Book keeping and external audit)	10,000.
(1.d)	Legal Advice and Support (in case outside legal advice is needed on any issue)	15,000.
(1.e)	Unpaid bills from 34th Staff Council	3,818.58

$40,818.58

(*) Balance due on loan of $25,000 extended to Staff Day 1990. See RES/44 of 26 July 1990 and Working Paper 65 of 21 January 1991.

Section 2:	Travel and Meetings		
(2.a)	Representation at meetings on behalf of N.Y Staff Union	5,000.	
			5,000.
Section 3:	Hospitality		
			9,000.
Section 4:	Office Equipment, Furnishings and Supplies		
(4.a)	Office and computer supplies not readily available through the U.N.	1,000.	
			1,000.
Section 5:	Communications		
(5.a)	Staff Newspaper	10,000.	
(5.b)	Misc. Printing Cost	5,000.	
(5.c)	Express Mail Service	1,000.	
			16,000.
Section 6:	Special Purpose Project Support		
(6.a)	Staff Benevolent Fund	10,000.	
(6.b)	Child-Care Bursary	35,000.	
			45,000.
Section 7:	CCISUA		
(7.a)	1991-1992 CCISUA Budget	40,000.	
(7.b)	Balance due from prior years a/	9,620.	
			49,620.
Section 8:	Disaster Relief	20,000.	
			20,000.
Section 9:	Unforeseen Expenditures	20,000.	
			20,000.
	TOTAL BUDGET:		$206,438.58

a/ See RES/18 of 2 November 1989 and RES/53 of 1 November 1990.